



THE JOINT STAFF

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

20 May 1959

DECLASSIFIED BY:
JCS DECLASSIFICATION BRANCH

DATE 13 Jan 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL TRIEBEL

Subject: Brief of Paper dated 15 May 1959, Subject:
Allied Counter-Harassment of Soviet Bloc
Transportation.

1. Background

a. The Murphy Committee which was formed as a result of the Special NSC Meeting of 23 April 1959 has developed the subject paper to meet a void in Berlin contingency planning as to allied action to be undertaken in response to Soviet or GDR harassment of allied traffic to West Berlin. Protracted and intensified harassment is viewed in the paper as being more likely than sudden total blockage of access to Berlin.

b. The paper has received the approval of the Murphy Committee, has been released to the U.K. and France for their comment, and a report to the President on the action is awaiting the signature of the Acting Secretary of State.

2. Concept of Counter-Harassment

a. Counter-harassment is conceived as action which is as nearly as possible equivalent in kind and severity to the original harassment and which is clearly intended to be removed when the harassment itself is ended. It is immaterial whether harassment is performed by the GDR or Soviets.

b. Examples of harassments are:

(1) Requiring GDR visas for allied personnel not stationed in Berlin.

(2) Imposition of tolls on the autobahn.

(3) Delay of convoys.

(4) Intermittent physical obstruction of ground access by passive means.

c. The targets for counter-harassment are primarily Soviet, GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Polish transportation. A caution has been inserted in regard to Poland because of the U.S. policy of encouraging her independence from the USSR.

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1. A more detailed, but not exhaustive, list of harassments and appropriate counter-harassments is included as an annex to the paper.

3. Main Findings

a. U.S. capabilities to carry out counter-harassments alone are limited and do not provide a sufficient range of appropriate retaliations.

b. Allied capabilities are considerable, particularly against Soviet bloc shipping in allied ports and possibly in the Kiel Canal and the Dardanelles. Legally, the possibility of effective measures in the latter places may be limited by the international status of the waterway.

c. Tripartite agreement on and NATO support of both the principle of counter-harassment and specific types of projected counter-harassments should be sought. Also, some agreement on ensuring financial losses and other cost may be essential. (Consultation on a tripartite basis has already been initiated.)

d. An inter-allied operational group should be established soon. This group to be prepared to recommend promptly specific counter-measures and coordinate their implementation when approved.


L. V. GREENE

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